

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated August 11, 2005. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejection set forth in the Office Action are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-9 and 11-19 are pending. Claims 2 and 10 have been canceled herein, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 1, 9, 11 and 17 have been amended. Support for the claim changes can be found in the original disclosure, and therefore no new matter has been added. Claims 1, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14 and 17-19 are in independent form.

The title, which was amended in the Preliminary Amendment filed on October 28, 2003, was objected to on formal grounds. In response, the title has been further amended. The title is believed to be indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed. Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation that Claims 2, 4-8, 10, 12-16, 18 and 19 have been allowed. Since independent Claims 1 and 9 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowed Claims 2 and 10, respectively, Claims 1 and 9 are believed allowable. Since independent Claim 17 has also been amended to include subject matter corresponding to that of allowed Claim 10, Claim 17 is also believed allowable. Since Claims 3 and 11 depend from Claims 1 and 9, respectively, Claims 3 and 11 are also believed allowable. Accordingly, all of the pending claims are believed allowable and the subject application is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Applicants note the Examiner's explanation of the reasons for allowing Claims 2, 4-8, 10, 12-16, 18 and 19. In that regard, it is noted that the features cited by the Examiner are not recited in, e.g., Claims 4, 5, 12, 13 and 18. Nonetheless, each of the allowed claims is understood to be allowable for its combination of claimed features.


In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

FOURTH REQUEST FOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF CLAIM TO PRIORITY AND OF
RECEIPT OF CERTIFIED COPY OF PRIORITY DOCUMENT

Applicants have filed three papers (on May 22, 2003, September 5, 2003 and January 27, 2005, respectively) requesting acknowledgment of their claim to priority and of receipt of the certified copy of the priority document. However, Applicants have not yet received the requested acknowledgment. Accordingly, acknowledgment of Applicants' claim to priority and of receipt of the certified copy of the priority document, as requested in the previously-filed papers, is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


Douglas W. Pinsky
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 46,994

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile No.: (212) 218-2200
DWP:gmc

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